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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Cnidaria, Anthozoa, Octocorallia, Anthotelidae, *Tripalea clavaria* (Studer, 1878): Distribution extension, first record for sub-tropical waters, Bahia, Brazil.

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Tripalea clavaria (Studer, 1878) is a colonial scleraxonian octocoral that presents a continuous distribution from Rio de Janeiro to the patagonics coasts in Argentine. This species has records in the Brazilian coast from Rio de Janeiro to Rio Grande do Sul, Uruguay and Argentine extending to the Strait of Magellan (Studer 1879; Kükenthal 1919; Deichmann 1936; Bayer 1961; Verseveldt 1967; Tixier-Durivault 1969-1970; Tommasi 1971; Capítoli and Bemvenuti 2004; Excoffon et al. 2004) (Figure 1).

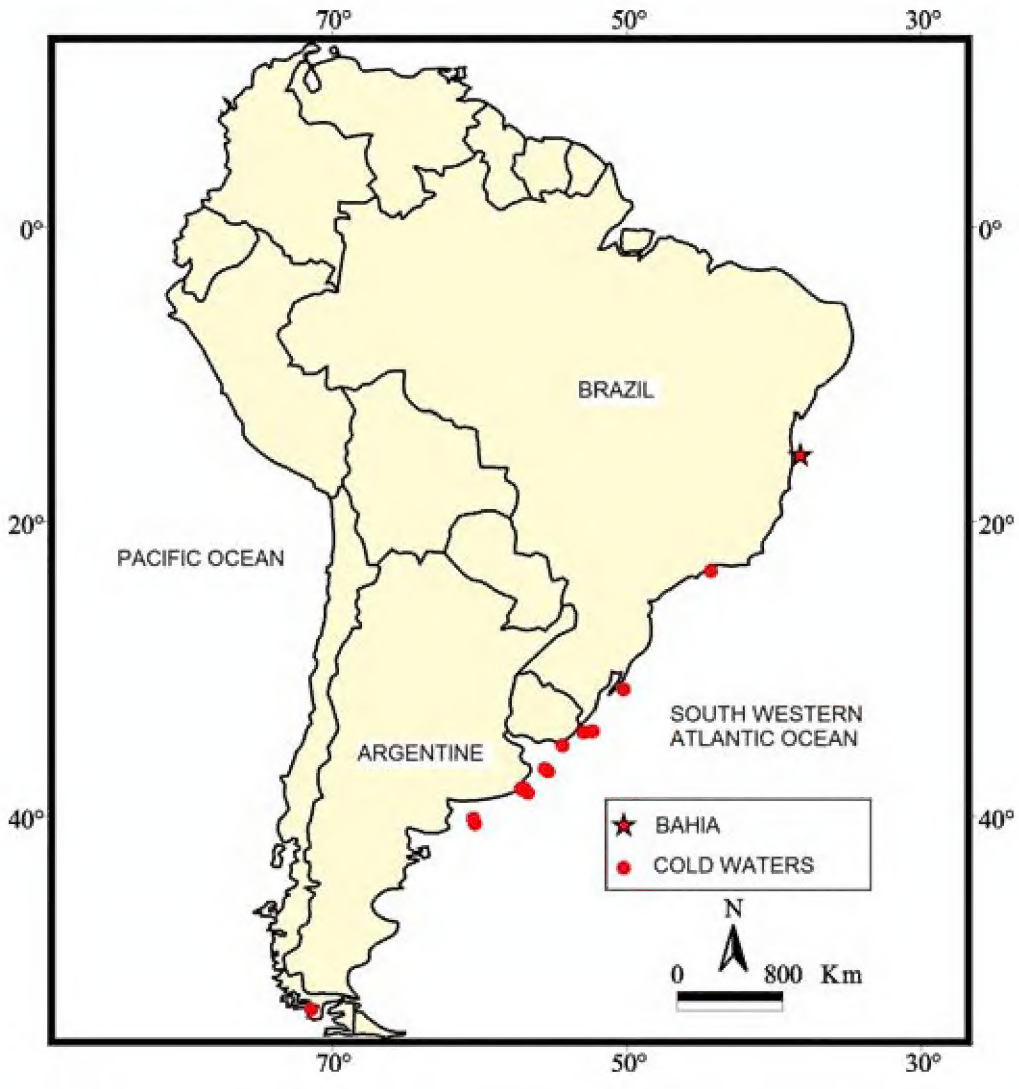

Figure 1. Distribution map of *Tripalea clavaria*.

Jacques Laborel colaborating with the scientific vessel Calypso during in 1962 and carried out samples of benthic cnidarians along the Brazilian coast between Santos and Recife. Afterwards, in the years 1966 and 1967, he finished his studies in Todos os Santos bay (Bahia) (Laborel 1969). Part of the material collected by Laborel was deposited in the cnidarian collection of the Departament of Oceanography at the Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (DOCEAN-CNI). One sample with four colonies of *T. clavaria* was analized (DOCEAN-CNI 101) proceeding from the Bahia state (12°58'15" S, 38°30'39" W) collected by the scientific vessel Calypso in 1962 (Figure 2).

Bayer (1961) had associated this species to cold waters with temperatures lesser than 20° C, fixing the northern limit of its distribution in the proximities of the Guanabara Bay in Rio de Janeiro, coincidently with the north limit of the influence of the Malvinas current. However, our results contrast with Bayer's asuption, indicating that *T. clavaria* is not a cold waters exclusive species, appearing to be a potential eurythermic species. This emphasizes the great plasticity of adaptation to differents environments. Based upon this new report from the litoral of Bahia, *T. clavaria* presents a continnuous distribution along the sudamerican coast between Argentine, Uruguay and Brazil, crossing natural zoogeographic barrriers, such as the estuary of Rio de la Plata with a low salinity of 32 ‰ (Pérez and Zamponi 2004).

Contrarily to the endemic status for the subantartic region, assignated by Bayer (1961), this octocoral is also a faunistic component of the subtropical fauna in the South Western Atlantic Ocean.

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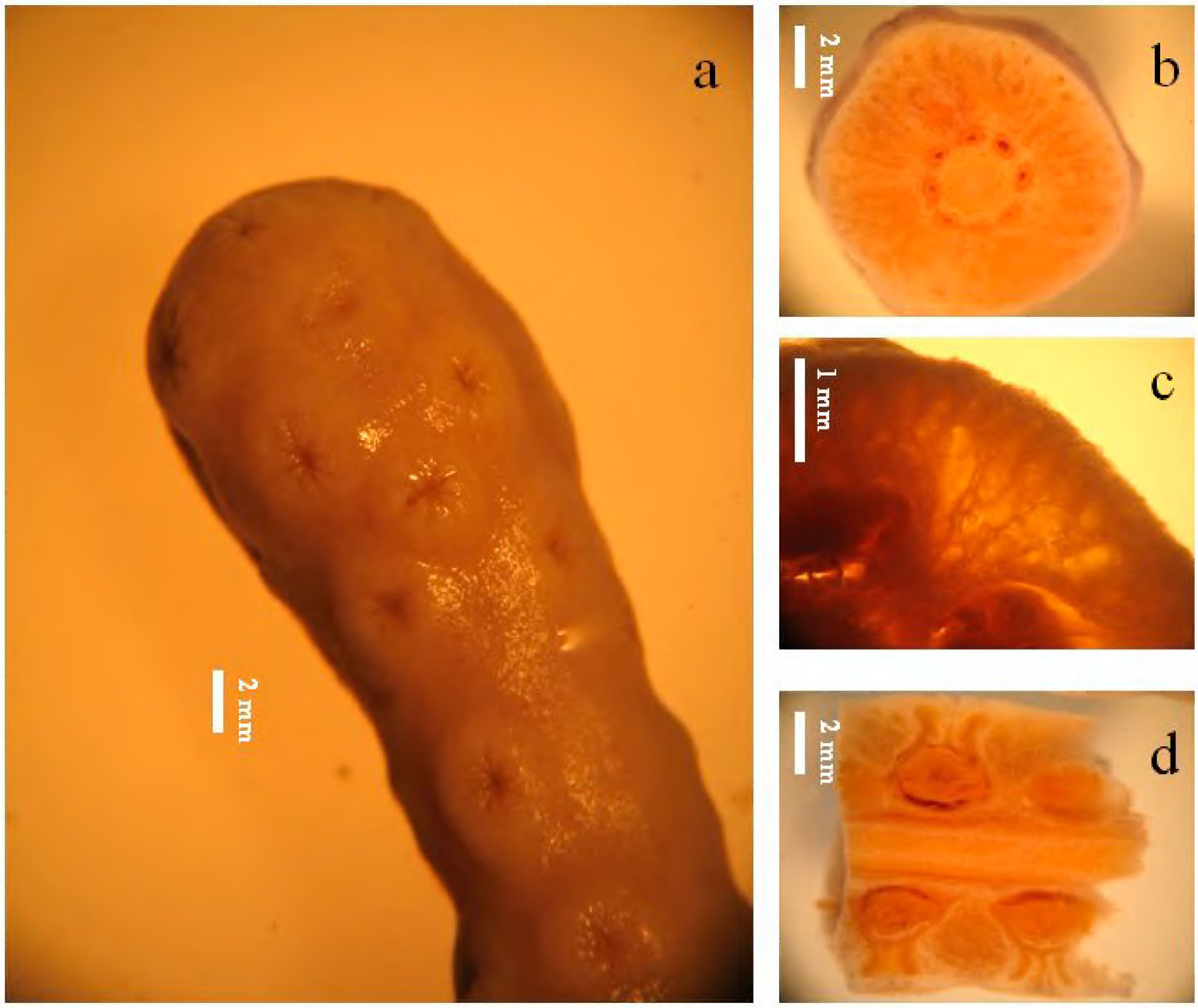

Figure 2. *Tripalea clavaria* (Studer, 1878) (DOCEAN-CNI 101): a, colony; b, cross section with longitudinal canals; c, detail of lacunar inner cortex; d, longitudinal section with retracting polyps.

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